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The trend of bond prices is now upward in response to the gradual easing of the money situation and the consequent lowering of interest rates, and many years will probably elapse before money will again have such a high purchasing power in the investment security markets as it has today.

Our circular No. 1773, *The Price of Money and Its Effect on the Price of Bonds*, offers suggestions that should help investors to take advantage of present opportunities in the bond market.

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FINANCIAL NEWS AND COMMENT

Fear of Strike Causes Slumps
in All Markets—Rail Is-
sues Especially Hit.

The railroad strike threat was a decided influence in the markets for securities, cotton and grain yesterday, causing general declines and discouraging purchases at the lower price levels. In stocks it appeared as though most of the selling came from professional sources, and while bonds were undoubtedly there were few rail issues which receded more than a half point. Strike talk and actual cessation of work long ago lost most of their potency in forcing liquidation of investment holdings, and there was no exception to the rule in the day's transactions. For one thing, the comment from all quarters except the railroad union offices indicated a fairly widespread belief that either the strike would be headed off through negotiation, or, if begun, would not be long lived. The attitude of railway executives strengthened that attitude of Wall Street, as such discussion as developed over Sunday indicated confidence that public opinion would be distinctly against any effort to hamper transportation at the moment when business was beginning to break the thralls of after war stagnation.

The short sellers in stocks, however, found that potential buyers preferred to wait for further events in the railroad situation before taking on shares, which made it easy to cause recessions which ran from 1 to 2 points before noon. Industrial issues, especially the petroleum group, held up fairly well for a time, but later softened and many were down as much as the rails at the close.

The railroad controversy unquestionably contains elements which may well prove to mark a new epoch in the return to normal conditions. It offers a test whether or not the expanded wage schedules of a few classes of workers are to be maintained by force at a time when the wages of most other classes have been carried down by stress of business reaction. So far as the union attitude has been made public it is less because of the proposed wage reduction of 10 per cent. than because the strike has been called than because of a vote taken on the 12 per cent. cut of July. It will be a test, also, of whether or not the railroads are to be permitted to help their precarious outlook for reasonable earnings as no figures which show that the carriers as a whole will not get into difficulties if rates are lowered without an offset in lowered costs have come to light.

Cotton fell \$4 a bale and wheat futures slumped 6 cents a bushel in Chicago. As in September, the markets all acted in concert and it may have been that the spectacle of declining securities reacted on commodities. The news of the day with direct application to wheat was not of a bearish nature, the Government's report of existing stocks being 76,000,000 bushels, or 12 per cent. less than they were a year ago. The report, however, showed some 50,000,000 bushels more in elevators than had been expected, and sentiment doubtless leaned toward the thought that the prospect of a railroad tieup would hasten liquidation in the remaining days before the strike is scheduled to begin.

There was no surprise for anybody who had followed the German financial policy in the sight of the mark rate falling precipitately to .52 of a cent at the start of business. A late recovery put it back to .59 per cent. of a cent. The movement here followed a break in London. It suggested strongly a real panic among business interests in Germany, and a brisk upturn of Dutch and Scandinavian rates as well as a bulge of 3½ cents in the London quotation seemed to disclose hasty conversion of marks into more stable currencies of other countries. Things are clearly drawing rapidly to a head in Berlin.

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